Waiting for Matisse

Just when I thought that
I might hold you forever,
you slipped into the night
a melting river of chocolate.
Your web of words a violin
of blue notes that fashioned
my hands into stone.

Centuries spent waiting on a
simple floating leaf, a buttercup
kiss, a soft parade of honey and
now these easy photographs of wide
American streets, a narcotic scent
of burnt cathedrals. I close my eyes
and remember the dark walls of your
mouth. The slow breath of fingers. The
flawless cradle of your face. A black
maria of words have gathered in the
space placed between us, and now
the pure notes of falling. I never
thought of knowing you as a gaggle
of crows gather in the distance, a
shadow of sky and angel spit placed
between us. I never thought of knowing
you, yet I have traveled all of this distance
just to meet you.

The broken song of Joan of Arc
captains up the moon. A door
opens and the unexpected kiss
of a Schubert sonata floats onto
the street. On the terrace the girls
are drunk early. In the absence of
light my ear becomes a tuned
galloping drum. The world seems
so large on these small streets. In
my mind stands a mountain of

verse. In my throat the naked voice
of silence. I never quite knew what
to say to you but my knowing that
you knew has always been enough.

Today I sat at the window and
thought of you. I saw you as a
sparrow in the coffee air, the
blue eyes of the black Madonna,
a Spanish cricket smelling of
apples. The clouds move like
fire and I can find no anchor
in this madness. How quickly
you have become shy, in your
knowing that I thought that
you were beautiful.

She sleeps on floating green arrows,
stitched to an umbrella of skin, haunted
by black shoes and Lilies at the long
shadow of river. I move about this new
century of chronic cold and long snow and
when I see you in this masked world I
see you as you truly are, those stabbing
teeth that you were born with, a black
kitten at your feet. How I wanted you
then and still do today. Then suddenly
it no longer matters that you could not
love me. I had no desire to change you.

Each night the moon examines your
life and if you are worthy the sun gives
you another day. Here is your world a
simple wooden floor, the sweat on your
face, an old pair of black shoes. I sit at
the window and gaze into the garden.
Outside a cricket sings and the sun
rises. Do you remember how as children
we fashioned bracelets and rings from
the stems of dandelions? I will tell you
a secrete, the other night I thought that
I saw you walking on water toward me,

speaking in a forgotten tongue. I took
this to be a sign that you had forgiven
me. That the moon and sun had been
terribly wrong and that you and I both
know that I was seldom a good man.
I place the shoes upon my feet and walk
outside the door and I search for your
face always.

On a morning of five suns a field of
grass moves in the wind spilling silver
prayers across a river of bells.
In the black swan sky a tower of yellow
haired girls throw carnation kisses towards
waiting green archers, as a whistle of
brown mice scatter to the ten am sound
of galloping hooves and broken harps.
Although you've seen the seven seas,
although your heart is breaking, still
it all was fun, to live the life you've
heard about in the broken song of
blue.

The sky turns gray on the other side
of this door. The wind brings the dust
of Sufi dancers and shoes for your
escape. Across the bridge we no
longer seek reflections in the well.
We sit with sunflower Kabbalahs and
the wife of God on sabbath nights. We
fashion easy riddles into bracelets of
smoke for soft pillow narcotic nights
and speak of angel blood and turn of
light as easily as one might destroy a
bedroom dresser left on the side of the
road.

The air smells of trumpets and an
angry sun blazes in a Jericho sky,
you come with seven angels and
a sword of confusion, you move
with the southern wind through
Tennessee and Kentucky, sitting
upon Noah's rainbow with old

testament eyes and a five dollar
book of prayer, and now you stand
in the stone house of God and dare
to call yourself art.

On the night of St. Francis under
the light of a naked moon, I
planted the soft perfume of
your tongue and a lock of
your hair in a field of easy
kisses. In the morning angels
staggered and everything
began to speak.

I was never bothered by the
canaries laying dead at your
feet, my attraction to strange
shoes, ash and tragedies have
cursed me, as you pull closed the
curtains on the tired eyes of angels
and begin to explain sages, profits,
priests and puddles of burning monks.

The day is turned to ash and
lanterns are burning in the sky.
A red shirt hangs from a door
and a thousand ripples are
crashing against the shore. You
have two days, two cigarettes
and a single cup. Something
flies overhead, one hundred
hanging cloths. You have
become one sweet note of
a grand overture, the maddening
moment of an expected kiss and
there is a warning toll in the air
as you reach out to touch the
face of your beloved once again.

The trembling flower of Monday
rings as the dull green thud of the
new week begins. Last weeks list
of nothing folded and coffee stained
alongside the next hundred hopes
of an ever changing new world, as
the days news bleeds the horrors
of our new century and Sundays
gospels fade and I feel the earth spin
and begin to write the latest chapter
of loss and love.

I remember how you moved on
a thread of rope, in a net of
darkness. A butterfly kiss in
an eyelash of moon. A raven
haired Judas with a pocket of
hooks and I confess that it was
only meant to get your attention
that open door, the one in the
candy cane air, the one that
you thought that you had shut
such a long time ago.

The October sun was rich with
the orange of Autumn. A paper
kite wind and the auburn scent
of apples floated across the room
as I rose to the sound of barking
crows and your rose hip walk
into the stained glass landscape
of America.

The moon is full yet small a
whisper of yellow in a century
of sky. In the accordion silence
only your hair speaks as we
walk this tangled vein of stone
in a raven of wind and our

portraits cut into the landscape.

It was on the night of seven bells
and you were beautiful with the
first snow of winter set softly
upon your hair and we walked
on ancient stones under the jazz
step strut of a diamond sky
towards a final whisper of
grass and the yellow storm
of home.

On a quiet morning we tossed stones
from a bridge and the river learned
our scent. Time and the day was
easy as your words fell like snow
and we washed in honey air and
drank the sleepy tea of winter.

The violin played Bach and
the ghost of winter danced
in your hand, as your scent
moved throughout the room
and the ice cream air dripped
the soft blue notes of a far
away rain.

I placed your clothes upon the bed
and prepared your dinner and still
you did not come. The clatter of
armies and a hammer of violins
become lost in the green tambourine
of my eye, as a sliver of yellow moon
appears. Then like a flower prayer I
inhale the scent of your memory and

I am lost in the chocolate ash of
night and broken blue of your
heart.

Your beauty has become a naked
tree an unblemished gift of bones
set into a drawer of brown earth.
The air is sweet with the smell
of flowers, the falling breath of
angels. How often I pray that
your bones might be drawn into
light and breathe the apple air
once again.

Soon it will be spring and
her green leaves will appear
once again on bones we thought
had been burnt sometime during
the last century. Her pink flesh
will once again be captured in
the polished mirror, but my
curious love of her will not
return, even though her ghost
stands before me now and
whispers, so this is where
you live.